

**State Advisory Council on Refugee Assistance and Services (SAC)****Background**

The State Advisory Council on Refugee Assistance and Services (SAC) is an advisory body comprised of individuals with a cross-section of experience from all sectors involved in or affected by the Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) in California. The SAC was established by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), in accordance with the Refugee Act of 1980. The SAC advises CDSS on refugee issues and ensures community involvement in policy discussions crucial to the development of a comprehensive, successful, cost-effective, and culturally and linguistically sensitive RRP.

The CDSS Refugee Programs Bureau (RPB) has direct oversight and provides support for the SAC. The RPB keeps the SAC informed of current issues affecting the RRP in California and solicits input from the SAC on the administration of the RRP.

Membership

The SAC consists of 15 individual seats with selection criteria that consider ethnic representation, expertise, constituency, geographical location, and association representation. Membership in the SAC is defined by two categories, public members and organizational/agency members. The terms of appointment for all members are for three years. Seven of the 15 seats are filled with public members from various refugee groups. The public members are only allowed to serve two consecutive terms. The eight organization/agency members may serve as many consecutive terms as their nominating agency allows them.

Eight seats on the SAC are nominated from the following organizations and agencies:

- The Governor's Office - one member
- The County Welfare Directors Association
 - two members (one member shall hold assignment as a County Refugee Coordinator)
- The California Department of Public Health
 - one member
- The Refugee Programs Bureau - one member (this member shall be chosen from the community-at-large and shall not be an employee of the Department)
- The Local Refugee Health Program Coordinators - one member
- The State Refugee Forum - one member
- The Joint Voluntary Agency Committee of California - one member

Purpose

The purpose of the SAC is to advise the CDSS on issues both specific and general as they relate to refugee resettlement. These issues include, but are not limited to, income assistance, health services, employment services, and acculturation services for California's resettled refugees. Also, the Council is to represent service agencies, community groups, and others by providing input and recommendations to the CDSS.

For information on the SAC nomination process, to obtain a nomination form, or for a list of SAC members, please click on this link:

www.cdss.ca.gov/refugeeprogram/PG1579.htm